



Patient Story Capture Tool

Help caregivers understand the patient experience

PUBLISHED BY

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RECOMMENDED FOR

Frontline nursing staff,
nurse managers, nurse
educators

EXECUTION TIME

80 min.

Overview: The goal of this exercise is to help frontline staff understand the importance of treating their patients as unique individuals—as opposed to defining them by an illness or condition. This tool provides participants with an interview guide to learn more about current patients. It includes a guided self-reflection to equip participants to apply the lessons learned from current patients to the care of future patients.

Type of exercise: Patient interviews and guided self-reflection.

Time required:

Step	Approximate Time Allocation	Owner
Two patient interviews	10 minutes per interview	Frontline nurse
Guided self-reflection	30 minutes	Frontline nurse
Concluding discussion	30 minutes	Frontline staff and manager/educator

Targeted skill: Looking beyond a patient’s condition to uncover their unique perspective and needs.

Tool contents and intended audience:

Section	Audience
Tool implementation guide	Manager/educator
Staff exercise	Frontline nurse
Discussion guide	Manager/educator
Evaluation guide	Manager/educator

Tool implementation guide: Manager/educator

- I. Select frontline staff members to complete this exercise. This exercise is applicable for all staff members.
- II. Share this exercise with participating staff members and agree upon a deadline. We recommend setting a deadline of two to three weeks after sharing the exercise with participants. Establish regular check-ins across the exercise period to answer staff questions.
- III. After participants complete the exercise, use the discussion guide on page 10 to initiate a conversation with individual participants (or a group of participants) about their experiences completing the exercise.

Staff exercise: Frontline nurse

Step one: Select a patient to interview. Select a patient for whom you are currently providing care and who is expected to remain on the unit for at least one more day. The patient should be alert, verbal, and strong enough to speak with you for a 10-minute interview.

Step two: Request an interview. Using the scripting below as a guideline, ask the selected patient to participate in the interview.

Sample Scenario:

Nurse: "Hi Mr. Jones. How are you doing today? Do you have a few minutes to talk?"

Mr. Jones: "Well, I've been better, but hanging in there. Sure, what can I help you with?"

Nurse: "I do everything I can to provide the best care to my patients, and I find that part of that is getting to know you better. Do you mind if I ask you a few questions about yourself, such as your interests, hobbies, and a little bit about your family? Participating is totally optional, so please feel free to say no."

Mr. Jones: "That would be fine. What will you do with the information?"

Nurse: "Good question. I hope to use what I learn to customize your care. The interview will take about 10 minutes. If it's okay with you, I'll take some notes while we chat."

Mr. Jones: "Okay, I feel comfortable with that."

Nurse: "Great—let's get started."

If that patient prefers to not be interviewed, use the scripting below as a guideline for your response. Then, approach a different patient to ask if he or she would like to participate.

Sample Scenario:

Mr. Jones: "Sorry, but I'm really not feeling up to having a conversation right now."

Nurse: "That's no problem at all. I understand and hope you can get some rest. Is there anything I can do to make you more comfortable?"

Mr. Jones: "I could use some water. Thank you."

Step three: Conduct the interview. Use the interview guide below to learn more about your patient as a unique individual. Record your patient's responses in the blank spaces provided. Use the final blank space to record additional information you learn about your patient or use it to capture the answer to an additional question you would like to ask.

1. Where did you grow up?

2. When did you move to this area?

3. What is your current (or former) occupation?

4. What are some of your hobbies?

5. What is your favorite sport and team?

6. Do you have a favorite book or TV show? What is it?

7. Who do you most enjoy spending time with?

8. Do you have any pets?

9. What are you looking forward to most after you leave the hospital?

10. What would someone be most surprised to learn about you?

Use the space below to capture any additional information you learned.

Step Four: Conduct an Additional Patient Interview. Select an additional patient to interview. (This patient should meet all the selection criteria listed in Step one and be interviewed during a different shift than the first patient you interviewed.) Use the scripting in Step two to request an interview. Record the second patient's responses in the blank spaces provided below.

1. Where did you grow up?

2. When did you move to this area?

3. What is your current (or former) occupation?

4. What are some of your hobbies?

5. What is your favorite sport and team?

6. Do you have a favorite book or TV show? What is it?

7. Who do you most enjoy spending time with?

8. Do you have any pets?

9. What are you looking forward to most after you leave the hospital?

10. What would someone be most surprised to learn about you?

Use the space below to capture any additional information you learned.

Step Five: Complete the Self-Reflection Questions. Answer the questions below by reflecting on the patient interviews you conducted.

1. How did your perception of your first patient change after you interviewed him or her? How did your perception of your second patient change after you interviewed him or her?

2. Did you learn anything that led you to change the way you did (or will) care for these patients? How did you change your practice?

3. How did your patients respond to the ways you customized care?

4. In the future, how will this exercise impact your interaction with patients and your nursing practice?

5. In the future, what steps might you take to learn more about the unique histories and preferences of your patients?

Discussion guide: Manager/educator

Use the questions below to initiate a conversation about participants' experiences completing the exercise. Discuss how learning more about these patients affected each nurse's practice.

1. How do you think your first patient felt when you interviewed him/her? How do you think your second patient felt when you interviewed him/her?
2. What question did your patients appreciate most?
3. What surprised you most about your patients' responses?
4. How did you feel when you asked your patients about their unique histories and preferences?
5. How did (or will) learning about patients as unique individuals change the way you care for these patients?
6. How did (or will) learning about patients as unique individuals change the way you care for other patients?

Evaluation guide: Manager/educator

Use the evaluation criteria below to assess participants' exercises. For each criterion, check the box with the text that most closely describes the participants' work. Check marks on the right-hand side of the spectrum may indicate a greater opportunity for improvement.

Guided self-reflection

<input type="checkbox"/> All responses demonstrate clear understanding of connection between learning more about patients as individuals and customizing care.	<input type="checkbox"/> Majority of responses demonstrate clear understanding of connection between learning more about patients as individuals and customizing care.	<input type="checkbox"/> Responses demonstrate muddled understanding of connection between learning more about patients as individuals and customizing care.	<input type="checkbox"/> Responses demonstrate no understanding of connection between learning more about patients as individuals and customizing care.
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Contribution to discussion

<input type="checkbox"/> Participant presents multiple, well thought out ideas during discussion about how getting to know patients as individuals will impact his/her practice in the future.	<input type="checkbox"/> Participant presents one or two concrete ideas during discussion about how getting to know patients as individuals will impact his/her practice in the future.	<input type="checkbox"/> Participant demonstrates vague understanding of how getting to know patients as individuals will impact his/her practice in the future.	<input type="checkbox"/> Participant cannot articulate how getting to know patients as individuals will impact his/her practice in the future.
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